

CHAMBERS' EDINBURGH JOURNAL

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM AND ROBERT CHAMBERS, EDITORS OF 'CHAMBERS'S INFORMATION FOR THE PEOPLE,' 'CHAMBERS'S EDUCATIONAL COURSE,' &c.

No. 364. NEW SERIES.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1850.

PRICE 1½d.

SKETCHES (FROM NATURE) IN A RAILWAY CARRIAGE.

"From nature!" Is that quite right? whispers, or would whisper, a grave young voice, to which, despite its youth, I listen oftener than the world in general or its owner herself imagines. 'Yes, my dear, quite right: since I shall paint nothing ill of my unknown sitters, and as no one precisely knows his own likeness, possibly none of them may ever recognise theirs.'

I took a journey. When, where, or under what circumstances, is of no moment to the reader; and I shall explain just as much as I choose, and no more. It was a journey that lasted 'from morn till dewy eve,' even in the swift-winged Express of one of our rapidest railway lines. How I glory in an express train! It is, of all things on earth, likeliest to a soul's travelling. The 'horse with wings,' of Imogen's fond longing, was surely a foreshadowing of it. How delicious to feel ourselves borne almost like thought to our desire! to see the bridges and trim stations dash by! to cease counting the quick-coming milestones, and idly watch the brownish line of the rocky cuttings, or the poppy-beds on the embankments gleaming past in a flash of crimson, while the distant landscape keeps changing like a panorama, and county melts in county, each one bringing us nearer to our hope and our delight! So much for a happy travelling! On the other hand, with what a sense of blessed exhaustion do we lean back, on some weary journeys, shut our eyes, and hear nothing but the dull whiz of the engine as it goes flying on, whirling us, we care little whither, even if it were

'Anywhere—anywhere, out of the world.'

Of either of these pictures the reader may make me the heroine as he pleases.

For myself, I commenced the journey with nothing heroic about me at all. Fancy a quiet little woman lying dreamily in a corner of the carriage, and never looking up for at least one hundred miles, and you have my likeness complete. I had one only fellow-traveller, a gentleman. Now, though too old and ordinary to have any prudish alarms, I own I dislike a railway *tête-à-tête*. It generally produces either a stupid silence, or conversation which is often wearisome, because felt to be a necessary courtesy. But on this journey, for many hours no such reflections crossed my dulled thoughts; I just saw there was a 'thing' in a coat near me, and no more.

After a while I opened my eyes, looked out of the window mechanically, and saw that the long cool morning shadows had melted into the brightness of noon. Turning back, 'I was ware' (as the knights

express it in my beloved *Morte d'Arthur*) of two kindly, but rather curious hazel eyes fixed on me.

'Would you like a newspaper?' The voice was half-polite, half-blunt, and the quick blush of boyish shyness rose to the brown cheek of my travelling companion, who, I now noticed, was, or seemed to be, a 'sailor laddie' of about eighteen. Despite the careless dress, and the rough, though not coarsely-formed hands, there was an unmistakable air of 'a gentleman's son' about the boy. I looked at the fair hair curling under the tarpaulin hat; the merry, tanned face; the necktie, sailor fashion, and my heart warmed to the laddie. It was no wonder *that day*, God knows! The sailor little thought how, regarding him with dimmed eyes, I saw sitting there, not him, but one whose face to me is now, and will be ever, young, as it was when I ceased to see it any more on earth. This and other feelings made me still rather silent towards my companion, who, after exchanging with me various *courtesies de voyage*, subsided into a boyish restlessness, and alternately peered out of the windows at the risk of his neck, held colloquies with guards and porters on every possible opportunity, or beguiled the time in consuming the most Titanic sandwiches that ever allayed a nautical appetite. Occasionally, my young friend, settled himself to a quiet doze in the corner, and then I amused myself with contemplating his face, for I must confess that all the world is to me an animated picture-gallery.

He was a handsome lad—very! Above all, he had one of those rarely-shaped mouths wherein the olden Greek model seems revived; and I have such a weakness for a beautiful mouth! This was to me a perfect study. In fancy I saw it, baby-like, on the maternal breast; boy-like, dimpling with fun, or compressed in passion, for there was a high spirit about the lad too; and then I speculated as to how it would look when the youth grew a man, and learnt to smile upon other faces than his mother's. It would smile many a heart away, that I knew!

Thus I filled my thoughts, most thankful that they could be so filled, with interest about this boy. I wove round him a perfect romance; and when he told me his destination—the same as my own—I, tender-hearted simpleton, feeling sure that he was a young sailor coming home, bestowed on him an imaginary mother and sisters; and putting myself in the place of either, fairly wept (aside, of course) when I looked at the laddie, and conjured up the meeting that would be that night at —.

We had speeded across shire after shire, and morning had become afternoon, when our quiet railway carriage was invaded by a host of fellow-voyagers. First were

lifted in, staring about with frightened looks, two little children, boys apparently, though at that anomalous age when sex is almost indistinguishable. After them came a stalwart nurse, with a Scotch tongue, and a handsome, rather Highland-looking face. Last, after having first carefully noted that the children were safe, and then bidden a rather hasty good-by to an elderly dame and an awkward young man, there entered a lady. I thought at first that she was the mother of the young fry, so anxious did she appear about them; but on a second glance, her face, though not exactly young, and rather worn, had not about it the indescribable look of matronhood, which can never be mistaken. Also, as she took the younger boy on her knee, and tried to hush him to rest, there was an out-looking, half-sorrowful restlessness in her eyes—such as one never sees in those of any mother when watching her slumbering child. The very consciousness of motherhood gives a sense of content and rest.

No, she was not the mother; I felt that even before I saw her ringless left hand. She must be an elder sister—governess—or most likely an aunt. Yes, she was the aunt. Why was it that, hearing the little ones call her so, a sudden pain smote my heart, and once more, but for very shame, I could have turned away my face and wept? Reader, you cannot guess the reason, and you need not be told. You know at least as much of me as you do of your next neighbour at a dinner party, or your pleasant companion on a journey, in whose breast some unconscious word or look of yours may call up a tide of thought or memory, while you both are as little aware of one another's real natures, or feelings, or histories, as if you belonged to two separate worlds; and each man living is to himself a world, moving on in his own orbit, intermingling with, yet distinct from, all his fellows, and able to draw light alone from the One unchanging Sun.

Pshaw! I am 'at my old lunes' again. I must be rational, not sentimental. Well, it took an awful time to dispose of our new fellow-travellers, for your infantocracy is the most absolute government under the sun. Behold us now—the children, aunt, and nurse, filling one seat, while I sat fronting them, having on either side my friend the young sailor, and another newcomer, a dark, bilious-looking gentleman of forty, who eyed our opposite neighbours with dislike and suspicion. So we travelled on for another hundred miles (we count by hundreds in this express), none of us making any efforts at acquaintanceship. But I—who ever walk through the world with my eyes open, thinking decidedly that 'the noblest study of mankind is man'—did not fail to make a few sketches for my mental commonplace book.

I watched the children with delight, drinking in large draughts of infantile beauty, for they were at the age when every motion is grace. The elder was a boy of five or six, delicate-featured, with a precocious gravity, even like sadness, in his look. It was the sort of face that makes one instinctively turn round to gaze once more, and gazing, to speculate on the child's future; not knowing but in the mysteries of those thoughtful baby-eyes lies dawning the spirit of a poet, a lover of science, or a philosopher. This child was apparently the aunt's pet. He sat on her lap, and looked about gravely, though with some slight hesitation, till he apparently became satisfied with his novel position. But the younger one still cowered, in

the centre seat, with a half-frightened, half-pouting air, which made me think him not nearly so pretty as his brother, until the Highland nurse took him in her arms. Then he looked up to her with such a smile! The fat, rosy cheeks dimpled all over; the brown eyes literally seemed to float in radiance; I never saw a child's face so waken into almost angelic beauty. From that moment the 'wee thing' was my darling!

I watched him both in his sleeping and waking moods for another half-hour, my glance taking in also the nurse's face, which bent over him full of tenderness and pride. She was a good study too. Looking at her, there came into my mind many a tale of Highland fidelity lasting a whole lifetime. I could understand it as I beheld these two. I felt a strange, half-envious sensation to see how the 'bonnie bairn' nestled in her breast, where probably he had rested night and day ever since his birth; how she bent her hard features into comical grimaces, to amuse her pet of three years' old, and patted his little fat knees with her brown great hands. It was no use—I could not resist any longer. I took the plump rosy fingers in mine, and began to talk to the child; but I could not gain from the shy little elf any more information than that his name was Johnnie, and his brother's Willie: after which communication, which the nurse politely but coldly confirmed, my wee sweetheart subsided again behind his 'mammie's' plaid, and silence once more spread itself over our railway carriage.

Heaven only knows how long it might have lasted, and we fellow-travellers have gone on eating our hearts out in most uncomfortable and uncourteous dumbness, had it not been for the blessed interposition of a storm of rain, which came dripping in a tiny cascade from the top of the carriage.

'Bless my soul!' cried the bilious gentleman; 'this is unpleasant—very! It must be looked to. Hollo there!' But shouting to the guard of an express train, then going sixty miles an hour, and with no hope of a stoppage within a county or two at least, is rather a work of supererogation. So the irascible gentleman found it easier to stop the leak himself, which he tried to do with most heterogeneous articles selected from his pocket, such as lucifer-matches, cigar-ends, fragments of torn letters, &c.; but in vain. The waterspout continued, though less than before, and it would drip upon wee Johnnie however he was placed. So I took off my plaid, and wrapped the child doubly and trebly, from which safe shelter he contemplated the waterfall with infinite satisfaction; and somehow, in our combined efforts against our watery foe, we all grew sociable together.

My dark-looking neighbour began to converse with me most affably and confidentially; and the phrase introduced within five minutes, and repeated every other five, 'When I was in India,' enlightened me as to his character and standing in the world. Nevertheless, becoming more explicit, he gave me his whole history from the cradle upwards, with sketches of his present life, and portraits of his family, including what seemed the great man among them, 'My cousin, Sir ———, the ——— But hold! for the baronet is known far and wide in Indian story, and I must not trespass on the sanctities of private life.

While we talked, my black-bearded neighbour and I, the young aunt opposite sat quiet and grave, occasionally putting in a word when addressed by the Indian officer, who did not seem to take her fancy any more than he did mine, though I responded to his courtesy as was due. But there was a certain coarseness in his aspect, and a selfish military dogmatism—(ah, I hate soldiers!)—in all he said. And he had scowled so on the poor innocent children when first they entered the carriage, and were made of such importance by aunt and nurse, that I somehow had taken a dislike to him. However, it was apparently

not mutual, so I did the agreeable to the best of my power.

Now, too, woke up the dormant powers of my sailor laddie. I discovered him in the act of making friends with wee Johnnie by means of various baby-tricks—the sure road to a child's favour. Johnnie, after looking deliciously shy—the darling!—for a minute or two, began to respond to the young sailor's attention, and very soon the whole carriageful was amused by a game of play between the two. I do love to see a youth or a young man fond of children: it argues a simple innocence of mind, and a feminine gentleness, which in manhood is so beautiful. My sailor laddie rose ten degrees in my estimation. I thought he looked handsomer than ever, especially his exquisite mouth, while leaning over smiling to the child, or coaxing wee Johnnie to his arms, in which he at last triumphantly succeeded.

'You seem to understand amusing children: have you brothers and sisters of your own?' I asked.

'Oh yes, plenty!' and he laughed merrily, and suffered Johnnie, now transformed into a most boisterous little king, to take all sorts of liberties with his hair and his neckerchief. He seemed quite in his element, bless him! I felt sure he was as good as he was handsome—was my sailor laddie!

All the while the Indian looked on, sometimes descending to a grim smile. The aunt smiled too, but rather pensively; and when Johnnie wished to draw his delicate-looking elder brother into his rather rough play, she came to the rescue of the gentle, half-reluctant Willie.

'He likes to be quiet—he is soon tired,' she said to me. 'They are neither of them very strong.'

'Yet Johnnie at least appears a sturdy little fellow—a thorough Scotch laddie: is he not so?'

'His father was Scotch.'

'And his mother?'

'She was an Englishwoman.'

'Was I—I could not help repeating the word she had twice used, with, I suppose, a look of inquiry, for she answered—'The children are orphans: both their father and mother have been dead these two years and more.'

More than two years. Then the youngest must have been a mere babe. What a picture of life was opened up to me! With what different eyes did I now look on the two children, and on the youthful aunt—for she was young. I found that out when, in talking, her grave face began to change. She was even pretty, especially when her loving eyes rested on her protégés. I felt sure that here was another of those stories of female self-devotion of which the world never hears, and never will, until the day when peals the divine sentence—'*Inasmuch as thou hast done it unto the least of all these little ones, thou hast done it unto me.*'

And when, tired with play, the two children crept to the arms of aunt and nurse, I began to frame for them a whole history both of past and future. I thought of the lost parents: of the mother especially, probably dying that saddest of all deaths—that which, in giving one life, resigns another. How keen must have been the pang in leaving those two babes to the bitter world! Then I turned and looked at the young creature who had assumed a mother's place and a mother's duties, and it seemed to me that her face was one of those in which one can read a story. She might be of the number of 'old maids,' made such by their own will, governed by some sad fate; and if so, blessed was she, who had so many holy cares to occupy her solitary youth—so many hopes of even filial gratitude to comfort her declining years.

'Rain still—how very annoying!' grumbled the military gentleman, breaking upon my musings in his anxiety to point out the scenery of a most lauded lake-country, which, however, is to this day to me a blank picture of mist, and cold, and down-pouring rain. And

then my polite companion hinted, with a covert, self-satisfied smile, that when he came next to this region, in a few weeks more, it would be a happier excursion than the present—in fact a bridal trip.

A comical communication this! But as I think we should travel by railway as we ought to do through life, making ourselves as agreeable as possible, and creating as many interests as we can by the way, I repressed my inclination to laugh, or to condemn the bridegroom's rather too great unreserve, and congratulated heartily this illustrious member of the H. E. I. C.'s service; upon which he told me the whole course of his wooing, and how he and his new wife were shortly to proceed to India, where I suppose they both are by this time; and if this page should ever meet his eye, I hope my fellow-traveller will accept the good wishes of his friend the unsuspected author.

Hours went on, dragging heavily enough. Towards nightfall the children grew very weary and restless, and then it was beautiful to see the unity that had grown among us fellow-travellers, and how we all combined to amuse the little creatures whom fate had given to our care for a day. I made my little basket of dainties—owed to kindness too deeply felt to be named here—into a general feast, wherein Johnnie especially gloried; the young sailor spent his time in contriving an infinitude of cats'-cradles, and even the Indian jumped out in the pouring rain to purchase gingerbread cakes, which, I suppose, were his panacea for all infantile woes. Yet he turned out not such an ogre after all, worthy man! and as his journey drew near its close—it was some hours shorter than the rest of us had to traverse—his sallow face lighted up into a positively benevolent expression. These lovely, lovable children were creeping into even his hard heart. And when, in perfect despair of amusement, Johnnie had gone the round of every knee in the carriage except his, I heard to my amazement the grim officer say, in the most mellifluous tone he could assume—'Wouldn't the little fellow come to me?'

And the little fellow, being now of most adventurous mood, did come. At first our dark-visaged friend looked as uncomfortable and awkward as if he had got a young tiger on his knee; but soon Johnnie's winning ways conquered all. The fat baby hand began pulling his stiff grizzled hair, where probably a child's hand had never played before; the innocent eyes looking up and laughing, brought into his harsh-lined, worldly face a softness that it probably had not known for years. I never saw such a transformation!

At last our East Indian neared his destination. Lingeringly he put down wee Johnnie, and began to search for his carpet-bag. He bade us all a cordial adieu, then took the child again and looked at him wistfully for a minute. Perhaps—for there is a warm, tender corner in every man's heart—perhaps some softened feeling came across the mind of the bridegroom expectant, and he thought of the time when he, too, might have a 'bonnie bairn' on his knee, and his rough life might merge into the gentle charities of home. However that was, I saw—yes, indeed I did—a tear on his eyelash: he kissed the child once, twice, hastily jumped out of the carriage, and we saw him no more.

Night soon fell upon us now wearied fellow-travellers. We ceased trying to entertain one another, or looking out at the country, and the carriage windows were closed lest the damp evening air might harm the sleeping children. 'We are always obliged to take such care of them,' the young aunt said. Even she at last dozed, and so did the sailor laddie in the corner. I only was wakeful; for alas! the temporary interests of the journey ceasing, I had forgotten my companions, and was sinking back into myself—a dreary thing always. We had come now into a region I knew: sharp and clear against the fading sunset rose the out-

line of the — Hills, with the young moon floating above their peaks, just as it had done one evening a year ago. A year?—say rather a life—for it seemed thus long. I steadily turned my eyes away, and looked back into the carriage, where beside me Johnnie lay asleep. I cannot—or else I will not—tell the feeling that came over me as I looked at his dimpled face, his thickly-curling hair of the colour I love, and the heavy lashes that hid his sweet brown eyes, which oftentimes during the journey had made me almost start with their strange, clear, un-childlike gaze. If, as I kissed him, a tear dropped over him, it would not harm him—my bonnie boy! *Mine!*—truly I must have been dreaming; and it was well the train stopped, to bring the little old woman to her right mind.

I shall never see Willie nor Johnnie more—never! They may grow up to be men—great and honoured perhaps—if, as in wee Johnnie at least, one may read the soul of genius even in a child's eyes. But I shall never know it: to me they are only Willie and Johnnie, for I did not hear their worldly name. Or it may be—though Heaven forbid!—that the young aunt's anxious guardianship was half-prophetic—that they may never grow old in the harsh world, but remain eternally children in the family above. However, and wherever their fate be, God bless them!

POPULAR MEDICAL ERRORS.

Lightening before Death.—Not unfrequently long periods of delirium or maniacal excitement have shut out from anxious friends the consoling but painful intercourse of the death-chamber. Sometimes a sudden gleam of returning reason will light up the darkness of these aberrations, and admit the last farewell and dying look of affection which dwell for ever in the heart. Who has not felt a something of the supernatural in these timely revisitations of the mind in those who are about to part with time and all who loved them? Nurses, who love the mysterious, delight in stories of this kind, and call this return of the mind a '*lightening before death*:' thus likening it to the throes of a dying flame, which for a moment shed a sickly illumination around, but only to make the succeeding darkness more apparent and appalling.

That the mind is thus often temporarily restored, is a fact continually brought before us, and one which is far from being so mysterious as it may at first sight appear. Sir Henry Hallford, in a collection of essays, which were read before the College of Physicians, has alluded to the subject, and gives an explanation which appears to me sufficiently satisfactory. He is speaking of the necessity of cautiously estimating symptoms of apparent improvement in the latter stages of disease; and mentions the following instance:—

'A young gentleman of family, about twenty-five years of age, took cold whilst under the influence of mercury. The disease increased daily, until it was accompanied at last by so much fever and delirium, as made it necessary to use not only the most powerful medicines, but also personal restraint. At length, after three days of incessant exertion, during which he never slept for an instant, he ceased to rave, and was calm and collected. His perception of external objects became correct, and they no longer distressed him, and he asked pressingly if it were possible that he could live? On being answered tenderly, but not in a way calculated to deceive, that it was probable he might not, he dictated most affectionate communications to his friends abroad, recollected some claims upon his purse, "set his house in order," and died the following night.* This appearance of a favourable change, Sir Henry Hallford ingeniously ascribes to the failure of

strength, and the consequent 'mitigated influence of the action of the heart upon the brain.'

The restoration of intellect immediately before death, or even the quiet and thoughtful exercise of the mind which sometimes precedes dissolution, seem, in the excited state in which we usually contemplate them, as almost given for prophetic purposes. Sir Henry Hallford brings forward much classical matter to show that the ancients regarded in this light the words of the dying. These I shall pass over; but I may just mention two quotations which he makes from Shakspeare, and which will be perhaps more readily intelligible than many of the other learned authorities which he quotes. When Hotspur is mortally wounded, he exclaims—

—'Oh, I could prophesy,
But that the earthy and cold hand of death
Lies on my tongue!'

Again, in Richard II., Old John of Gaunt, in his dying moments, says—

'Methinks I am a prophet new inspired,
And thus expiring do foretell of him—
His rash fierce blaze of riot cannot last!'

Scrofula.—Though names in reality cannot alter the things which they represent, and, as the great poet says, 'the rose by any other name would smell as sweet,' yet it seems that the public are not of opinion that a disease is equally acceptable under one name as under another. Now, in practice among the higher classes of society, very many cases of scrofulous disease occur; but who be to the medical man who is so unguarded as to make use of the word *scrofula*! 'Oh,' they would immediately say, 'you are quite mistaken, sir: there is nothing scrofulous in our family, I can assure you!' and this would be accompanied with a feeling of affront which nothing could afterwards remove. Do such persons know what is meant by *scrofula*, or are they afraid of a name? You may tell them that their friends are of weak, poor constitutions—of constitutions incapable of healthy action; that they are consumptive, the subjects of diseased joints, or enlarged glands, but never *scrofulous*. It must be owned the name is not a very pleasant one, for it is derived from the scientific name of the hog—'*Sus scrofa*'—from some fancied resemblance to the diseases of this animal. *Scrofula* has some claims, however, to be viewed as a fashionable complaint, for it is called 'the king's evil'; and you all know that the royal touch was considered a potent remedy. Thus in 'Macbeth'—

'*Malcolm.*—Comes the king forth, I pray you!
Doctor. Ay, sir: there are a crew of wretched souls
That stay his cure.'

I do not say that medical men should be over-ready to make use of a term which is connected with so many unfortunate cases of disease; but where the case is confirmed and decided, should it be altogether a forbidden term? A perfectly honest medical man is by no means always the best received, and many clever practitioners, who are successful in their profession, are as much so from their tact in discriminating character, and adapting themselves to the fancies and peculiarities of their patients, as to the abilities which they may possess or the information they have gained; but yet we will hope that honesty and truth will be discovered, at least by some, the approbation of whom will outweigh a whole theatre of others.

Vinegar.—Fat People.—There is a popular notion that vinegar will make people thin; and probably some who are ambitious of being more than ordinarily genteel may actually take it with this view. In the 'Gulstonian Lectures,' delivered by Dr Thomas King Chambers, May 1850, the subject is corpulency, and Dr Chambers casually alludes to this idea about vine-

gar. 'Vinegar has been employed,' says he, 'by those who are foolish enough to practise upon themselves; but as it produces thinness only by injuring the digestive organs, the benefit is not worth the price paid for it; and no medical man would ever advise the use of such a remedy.' Somewhat similar is the administration of gin to stop the growth; and I think a like explanation may be given of its action, if in reality it have any.

Dr Chambers does, however, mention one remedy, which, along with exercise and regimen, he thinks might be serviceable in excessive corpulency—namely, a solution of potass (*liquor potassæ*). He supposes that this would unite with the fat, so as to form a kind of saponaceous compound. Sir Benjamin Brodie has recommended the same medicine for fatty tumours. I must content myself, however, with denying the efficacy of vinegar, and leave the more strictly medical questions for decision in individual cases.

Slow Poisons.—The subject of slow poisoning is one with respect to which there has been considerable superstition. Beck tells us that in Italy it was formerly believed that poisons were invented for destroying life at any given period. Of course poisons might be given in small quantities, from time to time, so as to impair health, and eventually cause death; but this is not the idea which is commonly entertained on this point. That some poisons will operate long after the period of their administration or application, is proved by the fact, that the *virus* of hydrophobia is capable of remaining so long in a latent condition. It is said that the period of incubation, as it is called, varies from six weeks to eighteen months. We know of no poisons, however, which can determine death at particular and precise periods. The ancients are supposed to have given considerable attention to this subject, but no doubt much fiction is mixed up with these accounts. Professor Beckman tells us that Theophrastus speaks of a poison prepared from aconite which could be moderated in such a manner as to have effect in two or three months, or at the end of a year or two years.

Some of the slow poisons of the ancients were given as hair-powders, and contained preparations of lead, which were thus gradually introduced into the system. These were called, I think, by the French the *Poudres de Succession*, and for a very obvious reason. A great deal, however, which we read about the slow poisons is exaggerated, or altogether erroneous, especially what relates to their determining death at remote but precise periods. It is probable that many of these stories have originated in the then prevailing doctrines of anathemas and witchcraft.

Shingles.—The term shingles is one in common use. It appears to be a corruption of the Latin word *cingula*, which means a girdle. This complaint (the shingles) consists in a vesicular eruption, which breaks out generally about the waist, and, I believe, mostly on the right side. The spots come out in clusters, so as in time to form a kind of half belt; and there is a vulgar error, that if the eruption completes the circle, it is fatal. In Bailey's Dictionary, under the name Shingles, the writer gives the following definition:—'A disease: a spreading inflammation about the waist, which kills the patient if it gets quite round.' Fortunately this is not the case; but the complaint does seldom get quite round. It is altogether a curious affection, being preceded by darting pains, which continue for a long time, and are a good deal puzzling until the appearance of the eruption. The patient is perhaps anxious about these pains; but when the eruption shows itself, and you tell him it is the shingles, he is quite content; so that, after all, there is in physic, as I have said, a great deal in a name.

Soothing Syrup.—I cannot here avoid alluding to a practice of rubbing children's gums with preparations which profess to allay the irritation of teething. I think

the statements made respecting these syrups are peculiarly calculated to mislead, as they are intended to make it appear that the action of the medicine is entirely a local one. For my part I cannot but conceive that if such remedies have any effect at all, they operate in no other manner than that of producing a narcotic influence on the brain. Consequently they are to be classed in a category of medicines all of which are decidedly improper for domestic use. Many parents who are averse to the employment of professed anodyne medicines for infants, still think that there can be no harm in soothing the gums with what they consider merely topical applications. It would be well, however, for such persons to bear in mind that the gums and mouths of children, at a very early age, present active absorbent surfaces, and that medicines rubbed on such parts must either be totally useless or highly prejudicial. I have heard it said by mothers of considerable observation and experience that the use of some of these quack medicines in the nursery is of great utility. I am far from denying that anodynes may not be occasionally useful; but they should never be given at the discretion of any but properly-educated medical men, and only in those cases in which it seems that they cannot be dispensed with.

Monomania.—The public, and, I rather think, some medical men also, have what appear to me to be erroneous notions respecting monomania. Monomania, as the word implies, is madness on one particular subject; and it is often thought that if the patient can be set right on that particular subject, a cure will be effected. There is a story, and a very good one too, in the 'Diary of a Late Physician,' which, if I remember it rightly, turns on this idea. A man is represented as imagining his head to be placed on his shoulders the wrong way. For this insane idea a physician is consulted, who hits upon an expedient which is attended with the happiest results. The physician enters into his patient's conceit, condoles with him on his misfortune, and assures him that nothing but a severe operation can possibly rescue him from his calamity. The operation is no other than that of turning his head back to its right place. A room is accordingly darkened, and by the aid of an electric shock he is made to suppose that his head is wrenched round to its former position. His dress, which he had worn to correspond to his own notions, being at the same time set straight. This completely disabuses him of his delusion, and he rises a changed man. The story is called the 'Turned Head.' It is rather too bad to spoil a good story, and especially as it is the only funny one in a remarkably pathetic book; yet truth must be told. It must be owned that a lunatic will often manifest his insanity principally, or even solely, upon one topic; but I think it will be found that the subject in question is the one in which he is chiefly interested, and that if he could succeed in diverting his mind from it, the insanity would show itself on the next topic which interested him. It is not, in point of fact, the dwelling on the individual topic or single subject which constitutes the disease, but the habit of the mind to dwell morbidly on whatever interests the most. If you convince a man who fancies himself a tea-urn that he is altogether under a misapprehension, he will probably tell you on your next visit that he finds you are quite right in what you said: he knows now that he is not a tea-urn at all, but a sugar-basin, and will be obliged to you to keep at a respectful distance, lest you break him into pieces.

It is true that patients may continue saying the same things for years; but this is only the pertinacious manifestation of a wrong bias of mind, which bias is capable of showing itself in divers forms. Pinel mentions cases where a dominant idea has lasted twenty or thirty years.

The minds of people who have these peculiar dominant ideas, I think, would be generally found not correct

on others, if scrupulously examined; and in this opinion I find I am borne out by the late able Dr Pritchard. The wrong notion is not, then, as some people imagine, a mere single error, but an indication of a faulty direction of mind, which, as I have said, might manifest itself in various ways, and is probably more or less incorrect in all. People tell, however, the most remarkable stories about these monomaniacs, and even make them out to be the wisest of all people when the subject of their insanity is not broached.

In Aubrey's 'Lives and Letters of Eminent Men,' a curious instance is mentioned of this supposed monomania. Speaking of the celebrated James Harrington, the political writer, he says, 'His duration in prison was the cause of delirium or madness, which was not outrageous, for he would discourse rationally enough, and he was very facetious company; but he grew to have a fancy that his perspiration turned to flies, and sometimes to bees; and he had a *versatile* timber-house built in Mr Hart's garden, opposite to St James's Park, to try the experiment. He would turn it to the sun, and sit towards it; then he had his fox-tails to chase away and massacre all the flies and bees that were to be found there, and then shut his chasses. Now this experiment was only to be tried in warm weather, and some flies would lie so close in the crannies and the cloth with which the place was hung, that they would not presently show themselves. A quarter of an hour after, perhaps, a fly, or two, or more, might be drawn out of the lurking-holes by the warmth, and then he would cry out, "Do you not see it is evident that these come from me?" 'Twas the strangest sort of madness that ever I found in any one. Talk of anything else, his discourse would be very ingenious and pleasant.' The writer goes on to say—'He married his old sweetheart, Mrs Daynell, a comely and discreet lady'—which is certainly a good ending of the story.

Compound Fracture.—Medical men speak of fractures as simple and compound; and a common misunderstanding arises from this mode of expression, which it may not be amiss to point out. The error to which I allude is this—that a simple fracture is supposed to be a fracture in one place, and a compound fracture a fracture of a bone in two or more places. This is not, however, the meaning of the terms as they are employed in medical writings. Surgeons consider those fractures alone to be compound in which an external wound communicates with the bone—the injury not being simply the fracture of a bone, but a fracture compounded with an external injury. It must be confessed that the term is not a good one, inasmuch as it so naturally leads to misapprehension. The term complicated would be better, which I believe to be used in France.

Tongue-tied.—Beneath the tongue is a little fold of membrane, which is significantly called the bridle of the tongue (*frenum linguae*)—very useful, by the by, if it were really so. In some few instances it would appear to be so short, as to interfere with the free motions of the tongue, and it has been customary to divide it with a pair of scissors—an operation, however, which requires some care, as there are blood-vessels in the neighbourhood which have to be avoided (the lingual arteries). It is said by Professor Burns, who is an authority on subjects of this nature, that 'he has not seen two children in all his practice who really required the operation.' In cases where a child is able to suck, the operation does not appear to be necessary.

A late surgeon of Manchester, who, by the way, was a man of great information and extensive experience, was in the habit of amusing himself with the fears of nurses in this respect. When a child was brought to him with the professed intention of having the bridle of its tongue cut, he would smilingly ask whether it was a female infant. 'Oh,' he would say, in case of an affirmative reply, 'take your child away; I won't have anything to do with it. A woman who does not talk will be precious indeed!' It seems, then, that though the

bridle of the tongue is sometimes too small, the defect is far from being so common as is generally imagined. It may at least be considered as an error of exaggeration, worth being mentioned as such.

BRITTON THE TOPOGRAPHIST.

A YEAR or two ago some of the archaeological people bethought them that a testimonial was due to Mr John Britton, the well-known author of several topographical and antiquarian writings, of creditable research and respectable ability; and, accordingly, contributions have been raised, and a considerable sum of money got together, for the purpose. It happens, moreover, that the character of the testimonial is more than commonly appropriate. On being consulted with respect to the application of the fund, Mr Britton, with a sensible disdain for the customary trinkets, expressed a wish that the money might be devoted to the publication of a narrative of his personal life and labours, which he undertook to write, and which he trusted would prove interesting to large numbers of his countrymen, and might possibly stimulate and encourage some to honourable exertion. A portion of this autobiography* has been lately published, and the author is understood to be now engaged upon the remainder. Mr Britton has entered upon the eightieth year of his age, but, as he is a comparatively hale and vigorous old man, it is hoped that he will live to complete his work. From the pages already issued the following particulars have been collected:—

John Britton was born in Wiltshire, at the small village of Kington, on the 7th of July 1771. His father was at once maltster, shopkeeper, small farmer, and baker; and up to a certain time of life he appears to have been prosperous and successful in his several pursuits. We are given to understand, however, that he was mainly indebted for his success to the oversight and prudence of Mrs Britton. As, in progress of years, she came to be more and more engaged with the charge of an increasing family, her husband's affairs became proportionably perplexed, and issued finally in 'complete and distressing ruin.' The household was broken up, and the harassed and afflicted wife died prematurely of what is called a broken heart, leaving two of her youngest children to the care of a daughter only sixteen years of age, who, with some scanty remains of furniture, continued to hold possession of the paternal dwelling.

'In part of my boyish days,' says Mr Britton, 'Kington had no resident squire, clergyman, or person above the rank of farmer, or village tradesman. There were ten agriculturists, who kept horses, cows, and sheep, and about the same number of tradesmen, or "dealers and chapmen;" but I do not think that there was a newspaper or magazine purchased by one of the inhabitants before the year 1780, when the London riots were talked about, and wondered at. Five or six years afterwards, the "Lady's Magazine" was taken in by one of the farmer's daughters, and lent by her to my sister Elizabeth, who was fond of reading. One of the Bath papers was afterwards introduced to the village, and created an epoch—food for the gossip of the whole village. Farmer Robbins, our opposite neighbour, and Thomas, *alias* Tommy Collard, an old bachelor, both of whom seemed to live upon little-tattle, were the bearers and special messengers of all such news as they could comprehend and talk about through the whole extent of Kington; retelling it by pieces and scraps at the carpenter's, the tailor's, and the blacksmith's shops. At each of these houses they would devote about an hour to social converse, or rather to colloquy; for the tradesmen, if employed on work, continued their occu-

* 'The Autobiography of John Britton.' Portion of Part I., with Appendix.

pation, and rarely interrupted the talkers with anything beyond—"Well, well!"—"Indeed!"—"Is it true?"—"Strange!"—"What! in foreign parts?"—"That Lunnon is a mortal queer place!"—"Well, I shall never see at, nur any o' the papishes." Roman Catholics and devils were synonymous terms at Kington, and in many other country villages. I have often accompanied my old news-friends in their daily rounds, and listened with intense curiosity to their narratives. Mr Robbins was aged, occupied a small dairy farm, which required but a very small portion of his time, and Mr Collard lived upon a small annuity of about £30, and was called gentleman.

Mr Britton describes himself as being in his youth 'ever active, inquisitive, emulous, ambitious, and sensitive, whether in play, at school, or at work.' It has been matter of regret with him, however, that he found no one to direct his natural tendencies into any 'right and laudable course.' This was not owing to a lack of teachers, for he appears to have been put under the charge of a greater number than could ordinarily be provided for lads in a similar situation. He informs us that he was placed first under a schoolmistress, and then, 'with some intervals, under four successive masters'; all of whom, he says, were 'wholly unfitted for the arduous and important task' of instructing their pupils in the common elements of useful knowledge. They were 'completely ignorant of science, of literature, and of manners, and consequently could not impart either to their pupils.' These pedagogues are worth glancing at, as being several independent specimens of a class now fast becoming extinct in England; though here and there, in odd out-of-the-way places, one may perhaps encounter a few of their representatives. The first was a Baptist preacher of the name of Moseley, whose spiritual performances (which took place in a sort of dog-hutch of a chapel) were regularly attended by his scholars; but the secular instruction which he was qualified to impart was extremely trivial. His next master was a Mr Sparrow, who is described as being 'very unlike the Baptist; for he could write a good hand, knew the common rules of arithmetic, and could measure and calculate the acreage of a piece of land. He could also engrave ciphers and crests on silver spoons, and he even painted a White Horse, and a White Swan, for certain sign-boards.' With this gentleman young Britton tarried for about two years as a boarder, and made very respectable progress under his tuition; but the father, probably finding school-bills inconvenient, summoned him home, and kept him there in idleness for the next twelvemonth. Subsequently, he was placed with a Mr Stratton, 'a dull, plodding, illiterate man,' whose wife, however, was a parson's daughter, and, according to the pupil, possessed of manners and attainments superior to the station which she occupied. 'School,' says he, 'was always delightful to me, and its succession of tasks and duties was easily and rapidly performed. The smell of new paper, a new copy-book, and any other novelties, were always exhilarating.' The indifferent character of the instruction which he meanwhile received may be observed from what he adds in the next sentence:—"I do not remember to have seen a dictionary before I visited London in my seventeenth year. Geography, history, and books of instructive amusement, were unknown in that part of the country, nor did I ever hear of such periodicals as newspapers or magazines before I was fourteen."

Thus imperfectly furnished with intellectual capital, John Britton, at the age of thirteen, quitted school entirely, being required by his mother to assist in making bread, and in attending to the farm. He began now to understand a little of the weariness and dreariness of uncongenial labour. He had to rise at four o'clock in the morning, do his part 'towards converting a bag of flour into good and unadulterated bread,' and then afterwards to carry some of it out on horseback

to the villages and farmhouses in the neighbourhood. Then, on returning, he had to groom and feed his pony, to see to the wants of the general live-stock on the premises, and to perform a variety of odd and irregular duties connected with the household and the business. Being the general servitor and fetch-and-carry drudge of the establishment, he had little time to call his own.

In his seventeenth year, through the agency of an uncle who had a situation in the Chancery Office, Britton was removed to London, and 'provided for' by being apprenticed for six years to a tavern-keeper in Clerkenwell. His employment was a melancholy and monotonous routine, presenting nothing whatever to interest him, or to call forth any of the powers or capabilities of mind or disposition. He worked all day long in a dark cellar, at the dull labour of bottling and corking wine. Accustomed to the free, fresh air of the country, his health soon became affected, and, as may be easily conceived, he was very miserable. Only for one solitary half-hour in the morning, between seven and eight o'clock, had he liberty to walk forth from his cheerless cave of drudgery, to look at the fog-obscured sky, and to breathe the open air in the dingy and unwholesome streets. In the course of his brief perambulations, however, he made discovery of a couple of book-stalls in the neighbourhood, and thenceforth they became the objects of almost daily visitation—dim shrines of knowledge, where the sick yet eager spirit paused for frequent worship. By reading at these book-stalls, and now and then purchasing a stray volume out of his scanty pocket-money, to be perused at intervals—'not of leisure,' as he says, 'but of time abstracted from systematic duties,' and which he was obliged to make up for by extra exertion afterwards—he contrived to pick up a quantity of miscellaneous information, and to run through a variety of books on general literature, natural science, and theology.

And so the weary years crept round—dull beyond the common sense of dullness, and yet not without a certain, if unconscious, benefit to the painstaking and humble student. Nor let it be supposed that even the galling routine of 'bottling and corking wine' was altogether without its uses. There was doubtless a wholesome discipline to be gathered from it: it was an occupation that constantly exercised some unostentatious virtues—patience, self-denial, resignation to the necessary; a foil to the brighter prospects which youthful hope would be continually shadowing forth as the possible possessions of future years. Its lack of leisure rendered the casual moments of relaxation precious; time came to have a value and an importance to the mind of the young worker which an unlimited command of it would never have disclosed. Thus he learned the power of diligence, the worth of the present hour, the restraint of self; and taking courage from his successes in the pursuit of information, gathered also hope in the likelihood that he might some day rise out of his lowliness into an improved and more tolerable existence. Towards the end of his apprenticeship he became acquainted with a person who had influence enough to introduce him to two gentlemen connected with the profession of literature—the Rev. Dr Trusler, and the Rev. Dr Towers. They were neither of them very illustrious ornaments of their craft, but, as men of letters, they naturally obtained a wondrous deal of reverence from Britton. Shut out from intercourse with cultivated and intelligent society, and deriving his main delight from reading, he came to attach an undue importance to the personalities of authors. An author was to him a sort of mystical personification: to see one visibly in the flesh, and to hold any kind of converse with him, was an exaltation and a privilege like being admitted to communion with the immortals. What spiritual edification he derived from Drs Towers and Trusler is not made known to us, though, judging

from their published productions, one would conclude that it was not very significant.

The young cellarman's years of bondage in the Jerusalem Tavern having at length terminated, he found himself a free denizen of the universe, with the whole world to range in. What could seem more reasonable than that he should now sally forth to reacquaint himself with country scenes in Wiltshire? He accordingly set forth on his independent locomotives—that is to say, he made the pilgrimage on foot; saw such of his relations as remained there; and even extended his journey onwards into Devonshire, to the distance of 216 miles from London. And here it behoves us to relate that John had not escaped that malady which usually befalls a youth emerging from his teens—that pleasant insanity which is understood when a man is said to be in love. The damsel whose fascinations had bewildered him was lady's-maid to the wife of his late master, and endowed with charms more than usually bewitching. John was deeply smitten, and made love to her with an unlimited frankness and sincerity. It was no dallying, hesitating passion, entertained for mere amusement, but a downright, resolute, infatuated affair, like the rage of drunkenness, or the delirium of scarlet fever. For the last two years of his apprenticeship he courted her with a romantic steadfastness that bordered on the sublime, and which even the damsel herself could but imperfectly comprehend. The family, perceiving his passion, put their veto upon its further progress. Worse than that, they sent the little charmer home to Devonshire, to reconsider the state of her affections among her friends. It was to visit her, and to exchange pledges with her of an everlasting and exquisite attachment, that John journeyed into that interesting county. When he arrived, the young lady received him coldly. She declared that she did not think of changing her condition, and recommended him to think no more about her. All that long journey of 216 miles, performed with so much weariness and chafings of the feet, did not touch her sympathies, or kindle in her feeble heart either admiration or compassion. The lover saw that he had engaged in a foolish enterprise, and leaped to the conclusion that there is no constancy in woman. 'Disconsolate, and almost deranged,' he returned to his inn, to brood over his blighted prospects, and to entertain the thought of possible consumption and an early death. All the brightness of the world was utterly extinguished, and he felt himself an alien and an outcast on the earth.

In this dismal state of mind he directed his now unelastic footsteps towards London. On the way, he sometimes attempted to beguile his wretchedness by reading; but neither in Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey,' nor in Chesterfield's 'Principles of Politeness,' nor in the poems of Oliver Goldsmith, could he find anything either of delight or consolation. It was all vanity; and there was no remaining balm or gladness under the sun. Sometimes, as he journeyed on in deep dejection, he meditated, like Hamlet, the awful question of 'To be, or not to be?' but without coming very near to anything like a tragic conclusion. In his deep perplexity he drank a great many '*glasses of rum and milk!*' (a favourite beverage of his) 'in the hope that it would banish care, and exhilarate the spirits.' And let no sentimentalist be offended or incredulous when he hears that this 'medicinal' application had a very serviceable effect. He nevertheless arrived in London in a very piteous plight. He was almost shoeless, penniless, and shirtless; and his abject poverty had even compelled him to change a crown-piece, and sell a pair of silver knee-buckles which his poor mother had given him years before at parting. Then there was a period through which he suffered from want of work—a season of hardships and privations, and of the bitterest discontent. After a time, however, Britton obtained employment as cellarman at

the London Tavern—an irksome and slavish situation, and full of inevitable discomforts; but being at least a refuge from the perils of starvation, it was gladly and thankfully accepted. He afterwards became engaged in the twofold capacity of 'clerk and cellarman' to a bustling widow in Smithfield, 'whose cajoling and bland language flattered his youthful vanity.' She complacently called him 'Sir,' and affected to regard him as a confidential clerk, but meanwhile kept him in a disagreeable state of anxiety and suspense by making him responsible, out of his scanty wages, for every bad shilling and light guinea taken in the establishment. During this engagement, as we are informed, he 'lodged with a tinman in Smithfield Bars, having a bedroom about nine feet by seven, for which he paid eighteenpence a week.' The tinman was a devout Huntingonian, or follower of that wonderful fanatic, William Huntington, S. S., or 'Sinner Saved;' but it would appear that his young lodger was nowise edified by his conversation or devotions.

The drudgery and dullness of a cellarman's employments were always extremely unpleasant to young Britton, and therefore, in course of time, he began to look about him, with the design of obtaining some more congenial engagement. Among his personal qualifications he had a moderate gift of penmanship, and in seeking to turn it to account, he procured a situation in an attorney's office in Gray's Inn. His wages ('dignified with the name of salary') were but fifteen shillings a week; but the employment was more agreeable than his previous occupations; and as Mr Simpson, his employer, had little business, he found abundant time for reading; although he confesses that the books in which he was then most interested were of rather a frivolous description. He remained three years with Mr Simpson; and during the whole time, it was his custom to dine at an eating-house in Great Turnstile, Holborn, 'on very cheap and moderate fare; the cost of the meal, with beer, being seldom more than ninepence.' The parlour of this establishment appears to have been frequented by a few remarkable characters; amongst whom, it may be mentioned, was the Chevalier d'Eon, famous in traditional gossip for his assumption of female garments, after having been distinguished in the masculine character as a soldier and diplomatist; and Sir Charles Dinely, Bart., one of the 'Poor Knights of Windsor,' illustrious for his 'matrimonial mania,' and other simple eccentricities. At times, when his finances permitted him, Britton frequented free-and-easies, odd fellows' and spouting clubs; but his expenses, he informs us, never exceeded sixpence a night at any of these associations of smokers, drinkers, and convivialists. For the rest he continued to live in 'poor and obscure lodgings,' at about eighteenpence a week, and 'often read in bed during the winter evenings, because he could not afford a fire.'

The death of Mr Simpson, in 1798, threw him for a while out of employment. There were 'some weeks of inquiry and suspense;' but he subsequently obtained a situation in the office of Messrs Parker and Wix, solicitors, of Greville Street, Hatton Garden, at the improved salary of twenty shillings a week. Here he became acquainted with a young gentleman, who was professedly 'reading for the bar,' under the direction of Mr Parker, but 'whose volatility of temperament and poetical mind could not be induced to take an interest or find amusement in the dull technicalities and prolix verbiage of law-books.' Instead of studying Blackstone, or any of the illustrious bores of legal learning, he preferred to rush into premature oratory at debating clubs, and to cultivate an inclination for amateur theatricals. Finding Britton to be an intelligent young man, and interested in the pursuits of literature, he admitted him into close friendship, and they became for a time inseparable companions. They attended together most of the various spouting clubs and de-

bating societies with which the metropolis then abounded, and each in his way gained a measure of distinction among the members. Britton was no great orator, but he was in the habit of giving comic recitations, which, he tells us, were often received 'with vociferous and clamorous applause.' He was a regular member of the 'School of Eloquence,' in Old Change, Cheapside, where a number of young men assembled once a-week to emulate the displays of Cicero and Demosthenes. We are informed that it was a frequent habit with the speakers to invoke the 'shade' of the latter orator; and in satirical allusion to this propensity, Mr R. A. Davenport, who has since become a rather voluminous author, gave out the following lines as the motto of a Philippic which he threatened to write on the oratorical proceedings of the 'School of Eloquence':—

'Shade of Demosthenes! couldst thou but view

*This ranting, blundering, language-murdering crew,
Much should I wonder if, in furious ire,
Thou didst not kick them to their sooty sire.'*

At this point the autobiography is suspended. The real 'life-history' is yet to come. The uses of such a narrative may be various. Its main service, however, is to show us a man emerging gradually from an embarrassed and obscure environment, and rising by his own energies and industry to a creditable and even distinguished position in his generation. It will reveal to us the power of a steady purpose, and how a man need nowise be the slave of vicissitudes and impediments, but is invested with capabilities for overruling them to his own ends. It affords an illustration of the effectualness of pains-taking and regular application, of fixed and resolute devotion to an object. From the humblest beginnings this man has advanced, in the face of many obstacles, to the accomplishment of serviceable and substantial works. He is in many respects a fit exemplar to persons of the most ordinary endeavours, whose aims in life are anyway obstructed, and whose success depends upon the exercise of their personal abilities and a prompt and rightful use of their opportunities. All men are not bound to become authors, but every man may profit by the contemplation of that patient effort, and untiring diligence, by which this man's life has been distinguished. The same qualities which he has manifested in literature may be exercised as effectually in other directions, and produce results as valuable in the practical and every-day pursuits of life.

For the information of such readers as are not acquainted with Mr Britton's writings, it may be mentioned that they consist principally of industrious compilations on topographical and antiquarian subjects, and are distinguished among productions of their class for great accuracy and clearness. His earliest work was the 'Beauties of Wiltshire,' of which the first volume was published in 1801; and his latest (excepting the Autobiography) is 'Junius Elucidated,' which appeared in 1848. Mr Britton has thus been constantly before the public as an author for nearly fifty years. To a work of considerable magnitude, called the 'Beauties of England and Wales,' and on which the publishers are reported to have expended £50,000, he contributed a description and general account of Bedfordshire; and afterwards added the history of his native county, besides a number of other articles. In 1814 was published his 'History and Antiquities of the Cathedral Church of Salisbury,' which was followed by a series of other works descriptive of most of the cathedral churches in the country. These works are commonly considered important contributions to the antiquarian literature of the times, and are more attractive in perusal than is usual with such productions. Besides the above, Mr Britton is the author of many other books on biography, anti-

quities, and the fine arts, which cannot be enumerated here, on account of their number and variety. In all his writings there is great explicitness, fair method, and the results of laborious research. In mere literary qualities he can scarcely be said to have attained much eminence, though his compositions display a degree of taste, and a comparative felicity of expression and arrangement, by no means common in the class of publications to which most of his works belong. His most prominent characteristics have been described by one of his friends as being 'an enthusiastic ardour in investigation, a liberality of sentiment, an honesty in acknowledging obligations to others, and the strictest accuracy of reference.' 'These are qualities,' he adds, 'of which any author might be proud, and in these it may be confidently asserted that John Britton is not surpassed by any writer.'

REFORM OF DRUNKENNESS.

A LOCAL association, established for this purpose, is under our attention. In its deliberations up to the present time, two plans or proposals are announced—to raise the price of spirits by a shilling of additional duty, and to reduce the number of public-houses. We find a general inclination to believe that there is little virtue in these plans, and that the demon of intemperance can only be effectually put down by other means. It has been tolerably well ascertained by the Excise, that were the duty on spirits raised but one shilling a gallon, illicit distillation would be recommenced. If this be true, we should, instead of effecting a cure, only be raising a new disease. As to the suppression of public-houses, we can have no doubt that some good may be done in this way. Grant that a public-house has any legitimate end in view at all—that is, that it affords needful refreshment within the bounds of temperance—still it must also act in all circumstances as a temptation to those who, but for its presence, might not have thought of such indulgences. It is also a commercial interest. The landlord, in order to advance his trade, is exceedingly apt to get up raffles, shooting matches, and other attractions, and thus brings to his house many who otherwise would not have thought of leaving their own quiet homes. Therefore we believe that a more rigid restriction upon the number of public-houses is calculated to prevent much evil of this kind. It is, however, equally clear to us, that where a corrupt drink-loving population exists, the suppression of public-houses will do little to mend the matter. Drink becomes in these circumstances obtainable in private houses. It has even been found that men would go about the streets, with a bottle and measure under their coats, selling spirits in retired corners, and thus evading the government license as well as the efforts of philanthropical reformers.

Before we can hope to suggest effectual cures for drunkenness, it appears to us necessary to ascertain what it is which leads certain portions of the community to the excessive or imprudent use of liquor. Little reflection brings before us the fact, that men of enlightened and reflecting minds, who go on in their course with peace and hopefulness, who have a love of pure domestic pleasures, and tastes for what is elegant and refined, rarely are fond of drink; while, on the other hand, men of sensual and grovelling nature—men at suits with fortune, or who are subjected to some constantly-harassing evil from which they have no hope of escape—men who are debarred by their circumstances from purer pleasures and stimuli—are very apt to

betake themselves to the public-house. It is to a greater degree than is generally imagined a question of taste. Formerly, 'gentlemen' drank much—'gentlemen' were then unenlightened and unrefined, had little taste for reading, or for works of art, or for music: the coarse enjoyments of the tavern were congenial to such natures. Now the upper and middle classes are pervaded by superior tastes, and their use of liquor has declined till it has ceased to wear the appearance of a vice. Even amongst them, however, it is always found that drinking is in pretty fair proportion to grossness of character, or to some of those accidents of fortune which may be called the casual provocatives. Setting aside these minor causes—if this be a true view of the chief cause, it follows that the propensity can only be effectually allayed by measures which tend to subject all to the same reforms which, during the last sixty years, have befallen the upper and middle classes. We consider this as further made clear by the reform which is actually going on among the humbler classes. Is there such a change?—can such an idea be reconciled with the vast amount of intemperance which notoriously prevails among working-people? We answer in the affirmative to both questions. Even while large portions of the base of society are perhaps become more dissolute than ever, there is at this moment, amongst small traders and those described as operatives, a large and constantly increasing number of men of respectably temperate habits. It is the fair and proper result of the agencies which have been at work for many years to diffuse enlightenment and refinement in those circles—the schoolmaster-in-chief. Much is also owing to the improved social and political economy of the working-people. Professional skill, general intelligence, diligence, and sobriety, are now in general surer of effecting promotion than they used to be. There are increased temptations to saving. Wages go farther in procuring the comforts and elegancies of life. The skilled mechanic begins to see that he may live as rationally and comfortably upon his means as the little tradesman, or even certain orders of the clergy. There is a spirit of progress in the mass, often allied to fantastic and deceitful notions, but still useful as an inspiration elevating above material and immediate things. The cheap tract and periodical has, we hope, its allowed place amongst the improving agencies. Besides all others, it would be unpardonable to overlook the locomotive-engine and the omnibus, by which breathings of fresh air and rural recreations are brought within the means of so many to whom they would otherwise be denied. By all of these means together a reform is going on below the middle grade of society, and that, we venture to say, rapidly.

Now if we are to walk in this movement by the light of experience, and we know of no light which is steadier or safer, the true means of promoting the reform of drunkenness is—to promote those intellectual conditions, those refined pleasures, that spirit of hopeful progress, which have already been found incompatible with the vice. We deprecate other plans, such as the suggested increase of spirit duties and frantic wholesale onslaughts upon public-houses, as calculated to mislead the public mind from the right means, and to end in disappointment, and perhaps despair, in many whose continued energies on this subject it is very desirable to have. Attack the disease in the vitals which it pervades, not in the skin which vents its humours. Suffer secular education to come to all, and in all its force. Promote pure and recreative amusements. Favour the lecture-room and the reading-room. Further all arrangements which inspire hope and self-respect among the humble. Act as if you yourself believed there was a God over all, and that, all being his chil-

dren, every man is your brother, and you are in some degree concerned for his welfare. By such means we might hope in a few years to see a further reduction of the Master Vice of the age, and little of it left anywhere but at the very base of the social pyramid.

TWENTY-FOUR HOURS IN A THEATRE.

'How happy all those people look going to the play!' exclaimed, one afternoon about sixty years ago, a boy of twelve years old. He was standing in the window of a house in one of the principal streets of Rouen, and was watching with longing eyes a crowd of persons entering the theatre, which stood exactly opposite.

Seated at a table behind him were two elderly gentlemen, conversing and taking their wine after dinner.

'Oh how happy they are!' repeated the child with a deep sigh.

'Adrian,' said one of the gentlemen, 'if you want to amuse yourself, you must go a little further off; for Monsieur Broche and I are talking on matters of business, and cannot be disturbed.'

'But, papa,' replied Adrian in a doleful voice, 'I'm not amusing myself; I was only saying how happy people are that can go to the play.'

His father smiled. 'Then you think it would make you very happy to go there?'

'Oh yes, papa!'

'Well, Adrian, if Monsieur Broche is pleased with you—'

'Pleased with him!' interrupted the other gentleman; 'indeed I am not. Master Adrian is exceedingly idle and heedless; he confuses his notes, mistakes flats for sharps, and sharps for flats, and can scarcely remember the difference between a minim and a quaver. Do you know how he employs his time instead of practising the lessons I give him? He composes—actually composes music of his own!'

'Well, well, Monsieur Broche,' said the indulgent father, 'I hope in future he will be more attentive. And now, Adrian,' he continued, turning to his son, 'if you will promise me to study your music-lessons attentively, to mark the time and the expression, and not to displease Monsieur Broche, who takes so much pains to instruct you, I will give you money to go to-night to the theatre.'

Adrian bounded with joy. 'Oh yes indeed,' he cried, 'I'll be very good, very attentive!'

'Here, then,' said his father, giving him a silver piece of fifteen sous, 'go and amuse yourself. I cannot myself accompany you, but you will be able to go and return in safety.'

'To be sure, papa,' replied Adrian, drawing himself up proudly: 'I'm not a child now, you know: I'm twelve years old!'

'Here, boy,' said Monsieur Broche; 'take these three sous, and buy yourself a cake to eat between the acts.'

Scarcely waiting to thank either his father or tutor, Adrian seized his hat, and the next moment was in the street.

'Now,' thought he, 'I will buy my cake first.'

As he was entering the shop, he paused, and looking at his money, said to himself, 'Oh if I only had enough to go two nights instead of one!' But it would not do; reckon it ever so often, he could only make out eighteen sous; and two tickets would cost thirty.

A bright idea struck him. 'Here,' thought he, 'I have fifteen sous to admit me to-night, and who will make me leave the theatre? No one, I suppose. I will stay there all night and to-morrow, and then, when the evening performance begins, I shall be ready to see it. But then I shall want something to eat more solid than a cake. I'll buy two sous' worth of bread; and then, what shall I get for the other?'

Just then a fruit-woman passing, cried out, 'Buy my walnuts: twelve walnuts for a sou!'

'The very thing for me,' thought Adrian; and having purchased both bread and nuts, he entered the theatre, got his ticket, and placed himself on a front bench in the pit. It was the first time he had been there, so everything seemed new and enchanting—the well-dressed people in the boxes, the decorations of the house, the green curtain, even the smell of oil from the lamps—all were delightful. But when the play began, his ecstasy knew no bounds—the actors and actresses, the music, the yellow sunset and the white moon-rise, the green trees and the blue sea—all seemed a portion of fairyland; and the best of it was, that he felt secure of two nights' enjoyment. There he was in possession of the pit, and he might select whatever portion of it he pleased for dining and sleeping in!

At length the performance was ended: it seemed to Adrian as if it had lasted only a few minutes, when he was roused from his blissful reverie by the voice of a gentleman who was passing out, 'Are you not coming, my little man?'

'Not yet, sir, thank you,' replied Adrian politely.

'Ah, I suppose you are waiting for your papa to fetch you?' said the gentleman, whom Adrian's pretty and intelligent countenance had attracted.

The boy was silent, not wishing either to tell an untruth or to betray his secret; so with a friendly nod the gentleman left him.

A few attendants were still walking about the boxes, seeing if anything had been dropped or forgotten there, but they soon retired; the lights were extinguished, the doors locked, and our little adventurer found himself alone in the large dark theatre.

Adrian's first feeling was one of pride and exultation that his project had succeeded so far; his second was a species of nervousness, not unlike fear, as he thought of the strange loneliness of his position. However, he was determined to make the best of it, so, stretching himself at full length along a bench, he soon fell fast asleep.

Next morning, when Adrian awoke, he could not at first recollect where he was, nor why his little, soft, white-curtained bed was exchanged for a hard wooden bench; but presently the delightful thought of the second play recurred, and he stood up and stretched his cramped limbs. Just then he thought of his father—his mother had been long dead—and he felt great misgivings when he reflected on the probable disquietude his kind parent would feel when his son did not come, as usual, to embrace him that morning. Adrian tried to stifle the voice of conscience, which told him pretty loudly that he had acted wrong; and he said to himself—'Perhaps papa will go out early, as he sometimes does, and not return to dinner, and then he will not learn my absence. As to Monsieur Broche, I daresay he will scold me finely; but I don't much mind his displeasure: I shall have seen two plays instead of one. When I'm a man, I'll be either an actor, or an author, or a musical composer—no matter what, so that I can go every night to the theatre.'

In the midst of these reflections our young hero began to feel hungry; but he had scarcely commenced operations on his bread and nuts, when he was interrupted by a noise of screeching pulleys; then the curtain rose, and by the light of two or three tallow-candles on the stage Adrian distinguished several men. They were mechanics, who came to arrange the scenery and decorations, and every moment Adrian feared they would discover him. He dared not stir, and, despite of the hunger that tormented him, he was afraid to eat. At length he ventured to bite a morsel off his bread, and with the point of his penknife to open a nut; but in doing so he could not avoid making a slight rustling noise.

'There are rats in the pit!' remarked one of the men.

Adrian trembled from head to foot; nevertheless, favoured by the darkness, he managed to nibble his food, trying to make as little noise as possible. All his precautions, however, did not prevent the workmen from repeating now and then—'There must be rats in the pit!'

At length the weary day, during which Adrian was tortured with hunger, thirst, and the constrained attitude he was forced to assume, drew to a close, and with unspeakable joy he saw the workmen depart, and the hour for the play approach. Delighted with the success of his stratagem, he chose the best place in the front of the pit, and seated himself in it.

But, alas! the door opened with a creaking noise, and two men armed with long brushes entered and advanced towards Adrian. In one moment he dived beneath the bench, and concealed himself; but the terrible brushes approached, and he had only time to escape beneath the second row. Then, when he found himself enveloped in a suffocating cloud of dust, he began to repent of his escapade, but it was too late; still pursued by the remorseless brushes, he crept on from bench to bench, until at length he reached the very last. The next moment the rough bristles grazed his cheek, and one of the sweepers stooping down, exclaimed to his companion, 'Hollo! there's something here!'

'I claim my share!' cried the other.

'I protest,' said the other, 'tis a child's leg!' And he roughly dragged out our unlucky little hero, pale and trembling from head to foot.

'Don't hurt me, pray!' sobbed Adrian.

'What make you here, you little scoundrel?'

Adrian told them the exact truth, and finished by imploring them to allow him to remain and witness the play, which no doubt he had earned pretty dearly. But, deaf to his intreaties, the men laughed, and taking him by the arm, led him into the lobby. Fancy his chagrin to see at the very moment of his exit the doors open, and a crowd of spectators rush in.

'Oh pray please do let me remain!' he cried, clasping his little hands with an imploring gesture.

'Hold your tongue, and walk on,' replied the sweepers.

At that moment two gentlemen who had just come in uttered an exclamation of joy, and one of them, running up to Adrian, caught him in his arms and embraced him, saying, 'Ah, my child, what anxiety you have caused me!'

'You shall be well punished, naughty boy,' added the other.

In a few minutes the father, the son, and M. Broche were quietly at home. Instead of the amusement which Adrian had promised himself, he received a severe admonition, and was sent to bed after a supper of bread and water—a punishment which, indeed, he had well deserved, for causing so much uneasiness to his fond father, and also for the dishonourable intention of defrauding the theatre of the price of the second representation.

As this boy grew older, however, he became both wise and good, and in after-years was known in the musical world as the celebrated Adrian Boildieu. His love for the drama amounted to a passion. After his adventure in the theatre, his favourite amusement was composing little operas, and trying to represent them in his own bedroom. The furniture answered for scenery and decorations, and he, in his own person, represented both orchestra and actors. In one piece he wanted to introduce the rising and setting of the sun, and for this purpose hit on a notable expedient: he placed a lighted candle beneath his hat—that was night; then the hat rose by degrees, so very slowly, indeed, that it usually caught fire, and blazed up, which formed a most satisfactory and effective substitute for the light of noonday.

When nineteen years old, he composed the music

of an opera—for which a young friend of his, also an inhabitant of Rouen, wrote words—and it had such success in their native town, that old M. Broche advised Adrian to offer it for representation in Paris. The young man did not desire anything better. Poor in worldly goods, but rich in hopeful aspirations, he arrived in the gay, rich capital, and there disappointment awaited him.

His piece, although containing many happy ideas, was inartistic in its style and execution, and suffered besides from being inefficiently performed. The young artist perceived that he must recommence his musical education, and study the style recently introduced by Méhul and Cherubini. He was not discouraged, although he had no money, and the Conservatoire did not then exist. He gained a scanty livelihood by tuning pianos; and whenever, by strict economy in his food, he found himself possessed of thirty sous, he used to go to the theatre, in order to study those masterpieces which he was destined afterwards to excel.

The house of Erard was at that period the general rendezvous in Paris of distinguished men. Boildieu's talent and gentlemanly appearance gained him access to it, and there he met the celebrated singer Garat. The queen's singer, as Garat was then, chose Adrian to accompany him in public, and the young man's fame was soon widely spread. He produced several admirable operas in rapid succession, and took his place in the first rank of French composers.

The Conservatoire was established, and Boildieu named one of the professors. In 1808 he quitted Paris to accept an offer made him by the emperor of Russia: it was that of becoming director of the choir in the imperial chapel. During an eight years' sojourn in St Petersburg, Boildieu produced several operas, which established his renown; and in 1811, when he returned to Paris, he enriched the repertory of the Opera-Comique with many more. In 1824 appeared his masterpiece, 'La Dame Blanche'; and in 1829 his last work, 'Les Deux Nuits.' From that time Boildieu, being attacked by an affection of the larynx, was forced to suspend his labours. He commenced the music of an opera, for which words were composed by Eugene Scribe, but he lived to finish only the first act.

Adrian Boildieu, the rival first of Grétry, and afterwards of Rossini, expired on the 10th of October 1834, at the age of fifty-nine years.

MRS WRIGHT'S CONVERSATIONS WITH HER IRISH ACQUAINTANCE.

Mr Tyrrell. I'm proud to see ye, my lady; an' 'tis welcome ye are to my poor little place. An' how's his honour?

Mrs Wright. Finely, thank you, Tyrrell; quite recovered, indeed, and out again.

Mr T. Well, long life to him, an' to yerself, an' all the family, an' long may yez reign; for the poor will lose good friends whin yez lave us, an' so all the country says. I was wishing greatly to see ye, my lady, for these is awful times what's fell on us: I'm a'most bet wid thim. Corn at seven shillin', or six-an'-sixpence, I'm credibly informed a man sould at last market-day. How's the tinints to make the rint? Sure man alive can't do no more than I iver an' always am doing, from sunrise to sunset, I may say, an' more, strivin' an' strooglin', an' niver a ha'p'orth the better of all my endeavouirin': just consider now what's on the land. Rent-cess, rent-charge, poor-rate, an' a heavy family to kape up, an' a bare thirty acres to do it on.

Mrs W. The poor-rate neither you nor I can help. It is settled that we must pay it. I allow that it presses very unequally upon us—on Mr Wright, and

all of you his tenants particularly—because we have not one pauper receiving relief upon all our property; but people cannot be allowed to die of hunger, you know, though they do not exactly belong to us.

Mr T. Well, indeed, I suppose not, though it's a mighty hardship on thim that's inclined to industry to have to support the idlers, an' they none o' their own aither.

Mrs W. It is a tax that will get lighter year by year. Paupers do not live long in poorhouses, and emigration is much relieving us: it is increasing too, rather than diminishing.

Mr T. Why, thin, I don't know, my lady; there's a powerful number lavin' the country certainly. The best that's in it.

Mrs W. Rent-charge the land has always been subject to in one shape or another. It is no heavy sum now: and all we buy, being as cheap as all we sell, I cannot see that either this tax or the county-cess is a heavier burthen than it used to be. The county-cess, too, is returned to you with increased value.

Mr T. Returned, my lady; as how? The devil a pinny ivir I see again once it's left me.

Mrs W. Don't you? What do you think of the better road, saving the wear and tear of cars and horses, and the time of men? The bridge, that makes the crossing safe at every season? The doctor, who attends the sick—skill and medicine freely spent upon you? The fever hospital, rescuing you from the ruin that used to spread wherever that dreadful visitation lighted? The police, without whose watchful care we could hardly live in security? Believe me, the few shillings you so grudgingly give in county-cess are laid out to good interest.

Mr T. I'm obleeged to ye, my lady, for insensin me into such particulars. Not a know do we know of what they done with that or anything; but it's a great deal of money we do be racked for one way or another, let alone the rint.

Mrs W. Which should come first—value given for value received—and which alone you and I have any business with, as it is the only matter we have the power to arrange. You pay too high a rent for your farm.

Mr T. Long life to ye, my lady! I do; an' all the neighbours says the same, an' feels it thirselves: an' we have been spakin' of makin' application to his honour to consider the times, an' see can he make us any reduction.

Mrs W. I said you paid too much for your farm. I did not say you paid too much for your land.

Mr T. Sure where's the differ?

Mrs W. I'll show you. How many acres do you hold?

Mr T. Thirty, or all as one—all to a perch or a perch an' a-half, an' two cross-roads, an' the river measured in on me, an' all a bog in the bottom, an' torminted wid furze on the hill—nineteen shillin' an acre.

Mrs W. Nineteen shillings the Irish acre—equal to, say fifteen the statute acre.

Mr T. Well, I daresay nigh hand.

Mrs W. Three market towns within five miles, and a railway within seven.

Mr T. Sorra much good them railways done us as yet at last. I never seen one yet; nor doesn't much fraught the country markets aither. There's mighty little doing a'most anywhere.

Mrs W. You have thirty acres you say?

Mr T. Barrin' a perch or so. An' thim roads, an' the river.

Mrs W. And you pay rent for the roads and the river?

Mr T. Faix an' I do. May the blessin's attend ye!

Mrs W. And you pay for this rubbishy bit at your

door here I suppose? Half an acre at the least of perfectly useless ground!

Mr T. (*Scratching his head.*) I believe I do thin.

Mrs W. Nine- and- sixpence a year you make Mr Wright a present of out of your pocket, or rather out of the rest of your ground.

Mr T. Well, thin, now, I never reckoned that away.

Mrs W. I believe not. How many fields have you on your thirty-acre farm?

Mr T. Bedad I believe myself don't rightly know. There's the Furzy Field—bad luck to it any how—an' the Fox-cover Field, an' the Stony Field, an' the Green Loan, an' the Rushy Park—

Mrs W. In all seventeen fields. I know them well; each surrounded by a high hedge, or ditch you call it, eleven feet wide at the least at bottom, and more where there is a gripe on the one side—fourteen or fifteen I may call it then. Did you ever calculate how much ground is taken up with these ditches? You pay for it all; and what does it produce you? A ragged thorn-hedge, or a scourging furze one, and weeds enough to overrun all the land in the neighbourhood!

Mr T. Begor, my lady, but you've a quare way wid ye! Bedad an' I niver thought I was paying for thim ould ditches!

Mrs W. And for the great double-ditches, too—the mearn ditches on either hand of you. Twenty-two feet in the clear, you know.

Mr T. The devil an inch less; but what 'ou'd I do widout thim, and the neighbours' cattle trespassing for ever?

Mrs W. I wonder how much useless land you pay for in that double-ditch between you and your neighbours, and all those cross-ditches: two or three good acres you may depend upon it. If you would put three of your fields together, and take away half of the mearn ditches, for a beginning, and leave no waste corners, and cultivate this rubbishy half-acre, you would find your profits greater.

Mr T. Bedad, thin, I believe it 'ud make a fine calf-park, an' save the little gossoon I do be obliged to hire to look after thim beasts, an' kape thim from hurtin' thimselves along wid the big cattle.

Mrs W. The rent would get wonderfully lighter, Tyrrell, without any reduction from the landlord. Then if the Stony Field were stoned, and the Furzy Field were stubbed, and the Rushy Field were drained—

Mr T. Sure his honour charges for the draining!

Mrs W. But if the draining will give you five shillings' worth where you get but one now, you can afford to pay another shilling for a clear profit of three; or say it is less, still you will make of it.

Mr T. You've wonderful sence now to be sure, 'my lady. If I could be sartin, maybe I wouldn't have stood out so stout agin it.

Mrs W. I told you at the time you were foolish; for you would have been employed on your own land, and been paid for your labour, and would thus have had money to buy provisions with all the spring without touching what you had for rent.

Mr T. That's the ruination of the whole of us. It's the buying breaks us. The loss of the potatoes done it: there niver was sitch a misfortune befell the country!

Mrs W. It was desolation.

Mr T. The height of it. An' not one year; but five years, one after the other. No one could stand it.

Mrs W. If I can get dry-foot along the bawn, we'll go and see your wife. How is she?

Mr T. Only very middlin'. She does be destroyed wid cramps—takes her on the sudden, an' kills her outright. Well, thin, I'm ashamed of my life; I niver made the little pathway after promising. I do be so busy; an' that's an oogle spot. Wait, my lady, there's only one hinge on the door of the stable. There

now, I'll lay it across. Well, I will make that pathway, plase God, after the weight of the work is over.

Mrs W. I am sorry to find you still suffering, Mrs Tyrrell. I had hoped you were better. Are you very ill?

Mr T. Why, thin, nothing else, Lady Wright, my jewel—sufferin', an' mournin', an' wearin' away. But the Lord is good, glory be to his name! an' he'll rimember to make thair bed aisy in the next world that has thair trials in this. I'm not complaining.

Mrs W. The fine weather will improve you: perhaps you are not quite so bad as you fancy. I can hardly see to judge myself how you are looking.

Mr T. The childer bruk the winder throwing stones in thair sports, an' himself stuffed up the place wid straw, it was so mighty cold. There's light enough comes down the chimley for all that I've stringth to do.

Mrs W. Yes, and from the roof too: it is quite full of holes.

Mr T. For want of the bit of tatch. He's heavy rinted, my lady, an' has to strive to make it late an' airy, and has no time to tatch; an' I'm a'most worse than no use to him. Praises to his name that seen fit to lay his hand so heavy on us—Ochone! But I'm not complaining—glory be to God!

Mr T. She's wonderful bad entirely, the poor ould creature; an' niver stops, but sitting there saying her bades, an' sarrowin' for the changes that has fell upon us that onced had full an' plinty about us. Oh the potatoes was a great loss!

Mrs T. The greatest of losses!—the greatest of losses!

Mrs W. They don't look well even this year.

Mr T. By no manes. In this hilly pairt they're not gone as yet; but it's on thim: the drouth has kep it back; but they're no size—never growed since the stalk first blackened; an' they're saft, an' they're thinskin. There's none can tell how soon they may go on us.

Mrs W. They never were a certain crop.

Mr T. Never. Iver an' always we'd be afeared something might happen thim. But these last five years bates all.

Mrs T. Ochone—ochone! All praises to his name—amin!

Mrs W. In the old times, I don't think people trusted so much to them. Did your father, now, sow such a breadth of them as you have lying black all about you?

Mr T. His father! Thim was the times! In this cupboard—bare enough this day—the good whaiten cake, an' the little cool of butter, an' the bag o' male, an' the bit o' bacon, the dacent woman his mother never wanted. Many a blessed bit wid sugar or honey on it she give me, an' I a young slip of a girl passing her door. I'm not complaining: times is changed.

Mrs W. The late Mrs Tyrrell was an active stirring woman—was she not?

Mr T. A fine housekeeping woman, God rest her soul! that brought up eleven of us to folly her industrious ways, an' all a'most done well but only me; an' we wor comfortable too while she had her health, an' the potatoes thruve wid us. But sickness an' poverty crushes the spirits.

Mrs T. Mick, avourneen, don't be complaining; we be to bear it, an' does, thanks an' praises to his holy name!

Mrs W. It is our duty to bear it, Mrs Tyrrell; but it is also our duty not to sink under it. Providence has afflicted our country with a grievous famine. The food of the people has been destroyed. Now our part is to consider how we are to repair this evil.

Mr T. There's no repairin' it, my lady. It's no use strivin'. Haven't we, year after year, contrived, an'

saved, an' left ourselves bare of all else, strivin' to gather what would buy the seed for one more trial? An' all no use. One saison came on us worse than another. Now you'd wonder to see the people that went ragged, an' naked, an' hungry, wid ne'er a sod of turf for fire, nor more than able just to kape body an' soul together, never in all their straits brought to break the pound they'd kep for seed in hopes to bring the crap round agin. In coorse they wor ruinated, an' done their best.

Mrs W. Why stick so perseveringly to the potato? Why peraisit in depending on so uncertain a crop?

Mrs T. They was so aisy handled, my lady—no trouble in life; just wash an' bile the pot, an' no more about it. An' satisfactory: we never feeled we had a right good meal since the miss come on them.

Mrs W. Can you think you thrive with them? The old times, you acknowledge, were more plentiful than these, and people then did not live entirely on potatoes. Alone, they are not a fitting food; there is really not sufficient nourishment in them to keep up the strength of mind or body; besides, the easiness of their preparation encourages indolent habits. That you may give up trusting to them, they have been taken from you; and it appears to me that instead of vain attempts to revive an uncertain crop, it would be wiser to cultivate those which will not fail you. Try to fill the cupboard again. This can't be done by sitting over the ashes. Changed times require changed ways. I will send you down glass for the window; and do you rise up and work for bread and meat, and forget the potato!

THE DOG AND DEER OF THE FORTY-SECOND REGIMENT.

MANY of our Edinburgh citizens will remember a beautiful deer which, many years ago, accompanied the Forty-Second Highlanders, and how thousands in Princes Street were wont to admire the stately step, the proud and haughty toss of the antlers, and the mild, and we may almost say benignant, eye of this singularly-placed animal. Few persons, however, thought of inquiring into the history of this denizen of the hills, or how it came to pass that an animal naturally shy to an extraordinary degree, should have been so tamed as to take evident delight in military array, and the martial music of a Highland regiment. Still fewer, immersed in their city life, were acquainted with the amazing swiftness, the keen scent, and the daring bravery of the stag; whose qualities, indeed, might be taken as a type of those of the distinguished regiment to which it became attached. The French could abide the charge of our cavalry; they had some sort of understanding of such a mode of warfare; indeed, to do them justice, they were both skilful and brave in the use and knowledge of arms. But the deadly charge of the Highlanders was a puzzler both to their science and courage, and they could by no effort face the forests of cold steel—the bristling bayonets of the kilted clans. Among these regiments none suffered more—excepting, perhaps, the Ninety-Second—than the regiment which afterwards adopted the deer as a living memorial of their mountain fastnesses; and a dog likewise, which became attached to, and for years accompanied, the same regiment, may be supposed to symbol the fidelity so strikingly characteristic of the Highlanders.

Both the animals adopted by the regiment made their appearance in the ranks about the year 1832 at St Ema, in Malta. The deer was presented by a friend of one of the officers, and the dog belonged originally to an officer of the navy, who happened to dine at the mess. The latter animal, from that very night, formed a strong

attachment for the officers and men of the Forty-Second; no commands or enticements could induce him to quit the corporate object of his affection, and his master at length, yielding to a determination he could not conquer, presented the animal, which was of the noble Newfoundland breed, to the regiment. The attachment very soon became mutual, and thereafter the dog would follow no one who did not wear the uniform and belong to the corps. The men subscribed a trifle each, with which a handsome collar was provided for their friend, inscribed 'Regimental Dog, Forty-Second Royal Highlanders.' They gave him the name of 'Peter,' and it was a strange and notable day in the calendar of the soldiers when Peter and the deer, who were strongly attached to each other, did not appear on parade. Peter, it may be supposed, was a great frequenter of the cook-house, where a luxurious bone, together with a pat on the head, and a word or two of recognition, was his daily dole from the cooks—with one exception. When this churlish person officiated, Peter was frequently obliged to retire minus his rations, and sometimes even with blows instead—a kind of treatment which he could by no means reconcile with the respect due to him as the faithful adherent of so distinguished a corps. At any time when Peter happened to meet the delinquent, he was seen just to give a look over his head and a wag with his tail, and walk off, as much as to say, 'I have a crow to pluck with you.' By and by the season of bathing parades came round, and he used to accompany the soldiers in the mornings in such recreations, and was generally the first to take the water, and the last to leave it: he wished to see all safe. He knew his own power in this element, as well as his enemy's power out of it; and it was with a savage joy he saw one day the churlish cook trust himself to the waves. Peter instantly swam towards him, and pulled him down under the water, and would doubtless have drowned him, had not some of the soldiers come to the rescue. A still more curious exercise of his instinct is related of his residence at Fort Neuf in Malta, which is situated to the north of Corfu, and the entrance to which is a subterranean passage of considerable length. Beyond the mouth of this cavern Peter was in the habit of ranging to the distance of thirty-two feet, and as the hour of recall approached, would there sit with eyes intent and ears erect waiting the return of the soldiers. When the trumpet sounded, he showed evidences of some excitement and anxiety; and at the last note went at once to the right-about, and, as fast as his legs could carry him, made for the entrance, and was in a few seconds in the interior of the fort. The reason he went no farther than the thirty-two feet was apparently a consciousness that he had no pass, without which the men, he observed, were not permitted to exceed the boundary! That Peter actually understood this regulation was firmly believed both by the non-commissioned officers and soldiers.

The police at Malta, especially at Corfu, are very particular with respect to dogs in warm weather. They may be seen almost daily going about with carts, on which are set up wooden screens garnished with hooks, such as butchers use for suspending meat; and it is no uncommon thing to see from nine to a dozen canine corpses suspended from these hooks. Peter, it may be imagined, had a great horror of this ghastly show; and indeed he made many narrow escapes from the dog-hangmen. The regimental collar, however, was put on him, and every precaution used by the men to prevent his being destroyed. He was still allowed to go at large, but was always observed to look with a suspicious and uneasy eye at the death-cart.

Both the dog and the deer preferred to abide by the head of the regiment in and out of quarters. They always remained with the band. The men composing the band have generally quarters apart from the other soldiers, this being more convenient

for the
though
High
quar
the re
at an
their
look
party
was t
quar
them
of go
which
the c
once
the b
senti
was
extre
betw
attac
ness
with
great
of a
groun
bay.
On
eatin
north
by th
does
seize
over
was l
the d
to th
most
in 18
anarl
his c
legge
shot.
the i
of th
and

T
Sins
for
you
(Nov
have
whic
and
answ
happ
Jour
Y
man
simp
week
man
meal
amot
one
prec
dish
inst
our
mon
tion

for their musical studies and practice. Peter, although he would follow any of the soldiers in their Highland dress out of doors, generally preferred the quarters of the band; and should one-half or a part of the regiment be stationed at one place, and the other at another, whenever they separated on the road to their respective quarters, Peter would give a wistful look from one to the other, but invariably follow the party which was accompanied by the band. The same was the case with the stag. He likewise took up his quarters with the band, and followed closely behind them on the march. This individual was in the habit of going into the rooms of his friends for a biscuit, of which he was very fond; but if the article had received the contamination of the men's breath, he would at once reject it. Experiments were tried by concealing the biscuit that had been breathed upon, and then presenting it as a fresh one; but the instinct of the deer was not to be deceived. Latterly, this animal became extremely irritable, and if a stranger attempted to pass between the band and the main body of the regiment, he attacked the offender with his antlers. The combativeness of Peter was mingled in a remarkable manner with prudence. Being once attacked by a mastiff of greatly superior size and strength, he fled for upwards of a mile before his enemy, till he came to his own ground at the entrance of the fort; he then turned to bay, and gave his adversary effectual battle.

One day in 1834, while the deer was grazing and eating herbs on the top of Fort Neuf, situated to the north of Corfu, a cat in the vicinity, startled perhaps by the appearance of the animal, bristled up as puss does to a dog. On this slight alarm the deer was seized with a sudden panic, and with one bound sprung over the precipice—a height of two hundred feet—and was killed on the spot. It was remarkable that its friend the dog, although not immediately on the spot, rushed to the battlements instantly, and barked and yelled most piteously. The death of Peter, which occurred in 1837, was also of a tragical kind. He chanced to snarl at an officer (who had ill-used him previously) on his entrance into Edinburgh Castle, of which the two-legged creature took advantage, and ordered him to be shot. This was accordingly done; and so poor Peter, in the inexorable course of military law, fell by the arms of the men who had so long been his kind comrades, and who continue to lament him to this hour.

'ASSOCIATIVE CONCERNS.'

TO THE EDITORS OF CHAMBERS'S EDINBURGH JOURNAL.

London, November 25, 1856.

SIRS—I have been desired by the Council of the 'Society for Promoting Working-men's Associations' to thank you for the article in your number of last Saturday (November 23d) headed 'Associative Concerns.' As you have in that article hit upon several of the difficulties which lie at the root of all co-operative undertakings, and have expressed a wish to hear what has been said in answer to such difficulties, we hope that you may perhaps think it worth while to insert this letter in your Journal.

Your first point is—'the difficulty of securing honest management.' Our method of meeting this difficulty is simply, to have the accounts of each association audited weekly by a competent person, and to require the manager of each association to give security (either by means of the Guarantee Society, or otherwise) for the amount which he is likely to have power over at any one time. We do not of course mean to say that these precautions will do more than diminish the chances of dishonesty; and we are well convinced that one or two instances of dishonesty in the management (even should our precautions save the associations harmless as respects money) would in all probability ruin all the associations which have been established; for they must stand

on moral grounds if at all: but at the same time we hope that the chances of dishonesty are less than would have been anticipated. Not one single instance has occurred in the case of the manager of any association connected with us as yet, and they are now eight in number.

Your second point is—'the liability to dissension and insubordination.' Of course no set of rules, however perfect, can purify men's hearts, and enforce brotherly love and self-sacrifice. We therefore do not mean to say that our rules will do more than enable men, who try to work them honestly, to avoid many causes of dispute which would arise if they had them not. I think you will admit this when you have read the rules; I have ordered a copy of them, and of our other publications, to be forwarded to you. No man who is not prepared for self-sacrifice, and for casting aside mean and petty jealousy, has a right to enter an association. He will only do unmixed evil to the body and to himself. We have found this to be so in several instances; but, on the whole, our experience of the internal working of the associations has increased our confidence in the principle, that men working together for mutual profit will live more lovingly, and submit themselves more truly, than they do under the present system.

I shall not notice your next objection—'the unlimited responsibility of partners in this country.' The subject is too large to be treated of in a letter; and all persons competent to judge appear now to agree that the law must soon be changed in this respect, at least so far as those combinations of capitalists and working-men are concerned, which are now becoming numerous, and which are at present out of the protection of the law, or have had to be forced into the strait-waistcoat of a Friendly Society or Chartered Company—to their grievous detriment in most instances.

You next suggest that such a society could not hold together, if, in consequence of losses, or from other causes, the members could not realise as high wages or allowances as an ordinary master would give. Experience alone can answer this doubt. We are not yet of sufficient age to do so. It would seem probable, however, that an association of workmen under the supposed circumstances would fail and break up if they had come together for the sake of what they could get. But they would not fail and break up, but would draw more closely together, if they had come together to carry out a principle. Many of the Paris associations paid (by universal consent of the members) only three, four, and five francs a week for wages during many months: and the men who accepted these starvation-wages were, as they have since proved themselves, first-rate workmen.

Lastly, you ask, 'Will hiring labour be extinguished?'—the great question I admit—and you ask for an explanation of the fact, that there are *auxiliaries* at the Tailors' Association already. In answer, I beg to call your attention to Article 3d of our Constitution. You will see that it runs thus—'No hired workman shall be employed without giving to him the same rate of wages as an associate would be entitled to for similar work in the shape of allowance, and (unless he be dismissed for misconduct) a certain sum in lieu of profits, to be fixed by the association, or, in case of dispute, by the Central Board.'

'No new associate can be received until he has been employed as a probationer for a period, whether consecutive or otherwise, to be fixed from time to time by each association with the sanction of the Central Board.'

'All hired workmen shall be remunerated as probationers, and shall be entitled, at their option, to be considered as probationers.'

These regulations, which must be adopted by every association in connection with us, will, we hope, do away with the difficulty you suggest. As yet, we have found them work satisfactorily.

In conclusion, I would merely correct your statement as to the locality of the Tailors' Association: it is at 34 Great Castle Street, Oxford Street—not Holborn; and inform you that the members of that association have

received allowances for subsistence equal, as they inform me, to the usual run of wages, besides realising the profit which you mention, or something near that sum. I beg to remain, sirs, your obedient servant,

ONE OF THE COUNCIL OF PROMOTERS.

WRITING IN BOMBAY.

Perhaps there is no place in the world in which a greater variety of the human race is to be found than we have here, and yet the sources from whence all appear to derive a maintenance are fewer, and the occupations less diversified, than in any town in Great Britain containing a population equal to one-third of that of Bombay. First of all, the European members of this community are rapidly increasing. The merchants, artificers, and tradesmen of this class are comparatively few in number, and for the vast majority there appears to be but one means of subsistence—writing, writing, writing! and we to him who cannot turn out a fair copy! for this is what is here meant by writing. Secondly, the Indo-Britons are numerically an important class. Not a single merchant nor respectable shopkeeper amongst them. There are a few artificers and tradesmen, but the vast majority are employed in the public offices writing, writing, writing; and if any diversity of occupation should ever take place amongst them, it will be by copying, *alias*, writing! The third class, which comes most into competition with the other two, are the Purvoes, or legitimate scribes of the country. Many of these are excellent copyists, good accountants, and very passable book-keepers. As every genuine Hindoo is expected to follow the trade of his ancestors, the Purvoe is early taught to exercise his opening talents, and look for his future support in writing, writing, writing; in short, he may be said to be born, to live, and to die—writing! The last, and perhaps the most influential of the four classes, is the Parsees, whose omnivorous occupations leave a comparatively smaller number of this class to contend for the palm of scribe-ship than either of the other three; yet in nearly all the public and private offices of Bombay there are Parsees who manage to live by the all-absorbing occupation of writing. In short, an overwhelming majority of all the young men educated in Bombay, whether in our colleges, public schools, or private seminaries, have no other means of subsistence to look forward to but that of writing. It is evident that the public offices of government cannot find employment for a greater number of hands than they now have; nor is there any prospect of the commerce of Bombay ever flourishing to such an extent as to hold out any reasonable hopes of the mercantile community being able to employ such a number of writers as are being manufactured in our educational establishments. Even now the supply is so much greater than the demand, that a good native copyist thinks himself fortunate in being able to obtain a situation of twenty-five to thirty rupees a month. Upon this he can manage to live and to support a large family. Not so the European or Indo-British copyist. They would starve upon what the other could live comfortably; and yet, in many cases, the labours of the one may be as valuable to the employer as those of the other.—*Bombay Gazette*.

A FLUE OF FLUES.

In course of operations in the Tamar Silver Lead Mines, on the borders of Devon and Cornwall, it became latterly essential either to erect a powerful steam-engine at the foot of a subterranean inclined plane, 2900 feet in length, and running right below the river, which flows over the mine, to a perpendicular depth of 60 feet below its bed; or, failing that, to shut up the mine, and throw 1500 people out of employment. It was therefore determined to adopt the former alternative, and a twenty-horse-power steam-engine, one of the patent combined hydraulic engines from Walker's manufactory at Oliver's Yard, City Road, was accordingly fitted up at that depth. Flues were of course requisite, and it was found advisable to conduct these across to the farthest band of the river, and in a series of horizontal levels, united by per-

pendicular shafts, so that the flue in sections rises like a flight of stairs to the surface. The flue is no less than two miles long and upwards, probably the longest flue in the world. The result was quite successful.—*Builder*.

THE LADYE ANNE.

The Ladye Anne hath fixed her gaze upon the leaden sky,
A bright flush mantles o'er her cheek, yet death lurks in her eye;
And she will see but once again the young spring flow'rets bloom,
For when the summer roses fade, they'll fade upon her tomb.

Roses never more will be
Gathered, Ladye Anne, by thee.

The Ladye Anne she listeneth to sadly-chiming bells,
Chiming in the ivied tower down mid the brakes and dells.

Perchance she thinketh of the hours when she was wont to play
With fawns and conies 'mong the ferns throughout the summer day.

Slow and sad those bells will be
Tolling, Ladye Anne, for thee.

The Ladye Anne is passing fair, and she hath wealth and fame,
And youth and all earth's choicest gifts adorn her ancient name;
And yet she grieveth not to leave her heritage below,
Nor casts a fond and lingering look upon the glittering show.

Earthly joys have ceased to be
Cherished, Ladye Anne, by thee.

The Ladye Anne doth recognise an awful Presence nigh,
A shadow dread her footsteps tracks with stern fidelity;
Yet with a placid smile she greets the ghastly cold embrace,
Though oft an icy breath dispels the bright flush from her face.

Death himself appears to be
Welcome, Ladye Anne, to thee.

The Ladye Anne hath been beloved, and she hath loved again—

'Tis a tale of lamentation sung unto a holy strain;
For one stands on the unknown shore, and beckons her to come,

And share the eternal Sabbaths of a glorious starry home.
Home on earth no more to be
Rest, oh Ladye Anne, for thee!

C. A. M. W.

BERLIN PUBLIC VALET.

There is one going into that lodging-house who has nine masters—one literary gentleman, two lawyers, two *Hofraths*, one student, two barons, and one tradesman—for whom he performs more or less of the services of a valet. When he merely brushes clothes and cleans shoes, he receives a consideration of rather more than 2s. per month; and when he runs on errands, perhaps two or three times that sum; and besides this, Heaven sends him odd jobs and presents here and there, so that as his claims on life are not exorbitant, he is cheerful and content, and seldom in want of money, as the young baron to whom he is now going always is.—*Westminster Review*.

'CONSUMPTION OF SMOKE'—JUKES' PATENT.

Having received numerous letters of inquiry on this subject, bearing reference to a paragraph in No. 354, we beg to refer our correspondents to the proprietors, Messrs Surmon and Co., Canal Bridge, New North Road, London.

Published by W. & R. CHAMBERS, High Street, Edinburgh. Also sold by D. CHAMBERS, 30 Argyle Street, Glasgow; W. S. ORR, Amen Corner, London; and J. M'GLASHAN, 50 Upper Sackville Street, Dublin.—Printed by W. & R. CHAMBERS, Edinburgh.